GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5834
ANSWERED ON:10.04.2017
Minimum Wage for Tea Garden Workers
Rai Shri Prem Das

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a)whether the Government is working on a law to introduce a minimum wage for tea garden workers to ensure parity of wages across States;
(b)if so, the details thereof;
(c)whether the Government is aware of the malpractices of overtime, poor working conditions, starvation and deaths in tea gardens;
(d)if so, the details thereof; and
(e)the details of labour benefits like provident fund, gratuity and insurance paid to tea garden workers in the last three years, State/UT-wise?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (IC) FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
(SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA)

(a) & (b): Under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, the fixation of minimum wages for the tea garden workers, falls under the purview of State Government which is the appropriate Government to fix/revise the minimum wages.
The wages in the major tea growing States are as per agreement reached between the producer associations and workers unions.
It may not be possible to develop uniform system for fixing rates of wages throughout the country due to differences in socio-economic and agro-climatic conditions, prices of essential commodities, paying capacity, productivity and local conditions influencing the wage rate.
Contd..2/-

(c) to (e): The working conditions of the tea plantation workers are governed and monitored by the Plantations Labour Act, 1951(PLA) through the concerned State Governments for which separate Rules are framed by them. The said Act provides for regulation of the conditions of work in tea plantations and the welfare measures for the workers employed in tea plantations. The Act is unique in the fact that it requires the employers to provide the workers with housing, medical facilities, sickness and maternity benefits and other forms of social security measures. There are provisions for educational facility for the children, drinking water, conservancy, canteens, crÃ¨ches and recreational facilities for the benefit of the tea plantation workers and their families in and around the work places in the tea estates.

Besides PLA, number of other industrial and social security legislations are also applicable to tea garden workers which include Employees' Compensation Act, Payment of Gratuity Act, Provident Fund & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, (Assam Tea Plantation Provident Fund, Pension Fund and Deposit Link Insurance Fund Scheme Act 1955 − only for Assam), Payment of Bonus Act, Maternity Benefit Act, Payment of Wages Act, Equal Remuneration Act, Industrial Disputes Act, Factories Act and Industrial Employment (Standing Order) Act, 1946. These Acts are also governed and monitored by the concerned State Governments.

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